



# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** January 11, 2011

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## **Lincoln Completes the Year With Over 90% Tobacco Compliance Rate!**

In 2010, the Lincoln Police Department and the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department conducted 414 tobacco compliance checks of businesses that sell tobacco products. During the 414 tobacco retailer checks, 34 illegal sales of tobacco to minors (8.2%) were made resulting in a 91.8% compliance rate of businesses refusing to sell tobacco to minors. "Research shows that youth are less likely to use tobacco products when more than 90% of businesses consistently do not sell tobacco to minors," says Pam Rowe, Public Health Educator at the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department. "While we met this significant benchmark in 2010, our goal remains to achieve 100% compliance. This will only be accomplished as all retailers commit to checking all youth IDs and refuse to sell to minors."

Nebraska State law says that no tobacco products can be sold to youth under the age of 18. During compliance checks, cooperating minors use their own identification and make no attempt to look older than their age. The minors travel with Lincoln Police Department officers and attempt to purchase tobacco products from randomly selected retailers in the community.

If a retailer refuses to make the sale, a congratulatory letter is sent to the business saying that an employee successfully refused selling tobacco to a minor. If an illegal sale is made, the law enforcement officer immediately issues a citation to the employee for selling tobacco to a minor, and a letter detailing the infraction is sent to the store's manager.

To support all tobacco retailers and help employees avoid selling tobacco to minors, a free Tobacco Retailer ID Training is offered on a quarterly basis by the Lincoln Police Department. The training provides information about State and local tobacco laws, Nebraska State IDs, how to refuse a tobacco sale, and why compliance checks are conducted. Many people who have been ticketed for selling tobacco to a minor attend the class to help them prevent future sales. Retailers may also require all newly hired and existing employees to attend to ensure the law is followed.

A tobacco compliance check is one strategy in Tobacco Free Lancaster County's (TFLC) comprehensive plan to keep youth from starting to use tobacco products. TFLC is a coalition of over 50 local agencies and individuals dedicated to preventing youth tobacco use in our community. For more information, go to <http://tobaccofreelancastercounty.org> or call 441-6225.

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Enclosure

### Lincoln Retailers that Sold Tobacco Products to Minors in 2010

*\* indicates more than one sale*

*Al Noor	1307 S 11th Street	Kwik Shop	2040 S 56th Street
BP Amoco	2200 N 48th Street	*Kwik Shop	2330 N 1st Street
C Station	1120 S Coddington	Kwik Shop	4750 Calvert
Casey's	1001 S 13th Street	Russ's	2840 S 70th Street
Casey's	1140 N 48th Street	Russ's	6300 Havelock
Castle's Liquor	6001 Havelock	Save Mart	2727 N 11th Street
City Mex Market	338 N 27th Street	Shell Food Mart	6006 Havelock
Discount Depot	3301 O Street	*South Street Liquor	1000 South Street
Git-N-Split	951 West O	Super Saver	2662 Cornhusker
HyVee	7151 Stacy Lane	Tobacco Shack	4741 Holdrege
HyVee Gas	1515 N 84th Street	U-Stop	8231 O Street
Kabredlos	3291 Holdrege	Wagner's IGA	3008 A Street
Kabredlos	3560 N 48th Street	Walgreens	2600 S 48th Street
Kabredlos	4002 Adams	Walmart	3400 N 85th Street
Kabredlos	600 West A Street	Yankee Hill Amoco	640 W Prospector
Kong Liquor	1401 N 56th Street		

*Tobacco Free Lancaster County is a joint effort that focuses on keeping youth from starting to use tobacco, reducing access to tobacco products, and eliminating exposure to secondhand smoke. It's funded by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services/Tobacco Free Nebraska Program as a result of the tobacco master settlement agreement.*